

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

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PRESSURE ON BUSH FREES ADDITIONAL \$10.3 MILLION IN HEATING ASSISTANCE TO MASS. LOW INCOME FAMILIES

WASHINGTON – Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, today welcomed the release of more than \$10 million in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds to Massachusetts.

“After having written numerous letters warning the Bush Administration that the harsh winter weather is leaving many low-income families in Massachusetts without enough money for high home heating bills, I’m pleased to see that the Bush Administration has finally released more funds to help families pay their home heating bills.” Rep. Markey continued, “I am happy that Massachusetts will receive another \$10.3 million in LIHEAP funds, but I wish that the Bush Administration would have included additional funds for this important program in their budget – the request submitted to Congress earlier this week serious underfunds this important program and could leave many New England families without heat next winter.”

On January 22, 2004, Rep. Markey organized a letter signed by 44 New England and Midwest Members of Congress to President Bush to express concern over the urgent need to address a potential crisis that could precipitate from an extended harsh winter, increased heating oil prices, and shortages in heating oil supplies.

The January 22nd letter noted that according to the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Energy Information Administration (EIA):

“Residential heating oil prices rose significantly for the period ending January 12, 2004. The average residential heating oil price gained 6.2 cents from last week to reach 156.0 cents per gallon, an increase of 12.9 cents over this time last year. Wholesale heating oil prices increased 8.5 cents to 102.1 cents per gallon, an increase of 13.6 cents compared to the same period last year.”

The letter urged the Bush Administration “to immediately release emergency federal funds through the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to assist needy families in meeting their home heating bills.”

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